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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS PREVENTIVE DEPLOYMENT FORCE PURSUANT TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1110 (1997)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997) of 28 May 1997. By that resolution the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) until 30 November 1997 and to start as of 1 October 1997, taking into account the conditions prevailing at that time, a two-month phased reduction of the military component by 300 all ranks. This report covers developments in the mission area since my last report dated 11 August 1997 (S/1997/631).

II. COMPOSITION, STRENGTH AND MANDATE OF UNPREDEP

2. During the period under review, the mandate of UNPREDEP has remained unchanged. The mission continues to be headed by my Special Representative, Mr. Henryk J. Sokalski (Poland). The military component is headed by the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann (Denmark).

3. In the past three months, the military units of UNPREDEP have actively patrolled their respective areas of operation, while the military observers and civilian police have continued their community and border patrols. In accordance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1110 (1997), the two-month phased reduction of the military component by 300 all ranks commenced on 1 October and will be completed by 30 November 1997. The strength of UNPREDEP will, at that time, consist of two mechanized infantry battalions: a Nordic composite battalion and a United States Army task force, each with a strength of 350 personnel. The two battalions will be supported by a 50-person heavy engineering platoon from Indonesia. In addition to the 750 troops, there will be 35 military observers and 26 civilian police monitors. The authorized strength of 203 in the civilian component, including local staff, will be cut by at least 14 posts. The international civilian and military personnel are now drawn from 49 countries.

4. By the end of the troop drawdown, the total number of observation posts, manned by the Nordic and United States battalions, will have been reduced from

19 (including 3 temporary observation posts) to 8, all of which will be situated at the most sensitive border points. The reduced capacity of the reconfigured Force to monitor the areas along the northern and western borders of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will partly be compensated by the increased patrolling flexibility and more frequent resort to temporary observation posts.

5. The civilian component of the mission has been actively involved in monitoring and reporting on developments that might affect the maintenance of peace and stability in the country. It has pursued the good offices mandate vested in my Special Representative to assist in promoting a better understanding among the various segments of the population and existing political forces, with a view to easing inter-ethnic tensions and strengthening the application of international standards on human rights. It has advanced the use of preventive techniques, which have allowed the establishment of an active dialogue with the authorities and other major political forces in the country. Discussions and consultations at all levels have the objective of facilitating mutual exchanges of views and encouraging political and inter-ethnic communication. UNPREDEP and the Spillover Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Skopje have continued to cooperate closely on issues of mutual concern.

6. Based exclusively on voluntary contributions, UNPREDEP has endeavoured to reach out to the vulnerable segments of society through institution-building and experience-sharing. These initiatives have played an important role in building confidence between the people of the host country and the mission. Since mid-1995, the sum total of the extrabudgetary resources mobilized by the office of the Special Representative for social integration projects has amounted to some US$ 6 million, in cash and in kind.

III. ACTIVITIES OF OTHER UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS, AGENCIES AND PROGRAMMES

7. Various components of the United Nations system are engaged in different forms of assistance to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Several of them have established permanent offices in Skopje while others, as part of an imminent exit strategy, have been actively encouraged by UNPREDEP to take over responsibility in their respective areas of activity pending the arrival of a Resident Coordinator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assume the coordination functions temporarily carried out by my Special Representative.

8. United Nations organizations, agencies and programmes that have provided assistance to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in their respective areas include the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations International Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICJRI), the

Universal Postal Union (UPU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

International Monetary Fund

9. IMF and its resident mission in the host country have actively supported the programme of macroeconomic stabilization by way of three arrangements involving the use of IMF resources. A systemic transformation facility, amounting to SDR 24.8 million (1 SDR = US$ 1.5), was put in place during 1994-1995, followed, in 1995, by a stand-by arrangement of SDR 22.3 million, and in April 1997, by an arrangement under the IMF's concessional Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF). A total of SDR 54.6 million is available under this latest arrangement for the period 1997-1999, of which SDR 9.09 million has already been disbursed. A second disbursement of the same amount is conditional, inter alia, upon the completion of a mid-term review of the programme. IMF also focuses on advancing structural reforms. It has supplemented its three arrangements with an extensive programme of technical assistance, particularly in the areas of fiscal policy administration, tax and expenditure reform, banking supervision, monetary policy reform and the compilation of macroeconomic statistics.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

10. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been engaged with the host Government in the elaboration of a technical cooperation project focusing on human rights. The possible elements of the project include incorporation of human rights education into school curricula, development of human rights documentation resources and special programmes to strengthen the Office of the Ombudsman. The project will also involve the possible participation of the academic community, non-governmental organizations and groups in civil society.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

11. UNHCR continues to provide assistance to the 3,500 Bosnian refugees still residing in the country. So far, three flights organized under the repatriation scheme have taken back to Bosnia and Herzegovina some 252 refugees. The number of returns is expected to reach 500 by the end of the year. For those not wishing to repatriate, UNHCR will provide assistance to encourage self-sufficiency and diminish dependence on international aid. In 1998, UNHCR will lay greater emphasis on institution-building activities that will focus in particular on filling the lacunae in national legislation relating to refugees and the issue of citizenship and regulations to reduce statelessness. UNHCR will also analyse transit and migratory trends and strengthen its collaboration with States and institutions of regional European structures.

United Nations Children's Fund

12. The UNICEF Office at Skopje is a key partner of the Ministry of Health in the area of nutrition, providing support to service development, the production of public information materials and policy advocacy. The country's first rooming-in facility has been established in the national gynaecological clinic

in Skopje and is expected to be the first of many. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is also a significant supporter of the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI), supplying vaccines and vaccine storage equipment, as well as supporting the training of health-care staff in new skills and policy expertise in the latest EPI developments. Together with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF has supported the national reimmunization campaign, in response to polio outbreaks in neighbouring countries, for which UNPREDEP has provided some logistics support. In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF has supported a significant initiative in primary teaching, which has emerged as a pilot model in educational reform in the countries of the region. UNICEF is also working closely with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in the development of alternatives to institutional care. Most recently, this has necessitated major revisions to the legislation on fostering and adoption. UNICEF is further supporting training initiatives for the staff of institutions to enhance the quality of care available.

United Nations Development Programme

13. UNDP has funded a project of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to assist the Government in formulating a national development strategy which will give directions to the country to move towards a fully open market-based economy and responsive governance. The National Development Strategy will serve as a basis for future action by the Government and the international community in shaping the macroeconomic framework for sustainable growth. Other UNDP activities are focused on the establishment of an investment promotion agency with the technical assistance of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); and the training of social sector trainers by the Institute of Social Work and Social Policy of the University of Skopje, financed by the Government of Finland, on UNPREDEP's initiative. Prospective programmes will focus on formulating activities in the areas of aid coordination and support to the environmental sector. UNDP has agreed with the authorities of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to open a country liaison office in Skopje in early 1998. In view of the small amount of UNDP funds available to the country, the office will be headed by a senior UNDP staff member who will be fully in charge of implementing and managing UNDP-financed activities. Should the office raise additional donor resources for development programmes, it would be possible to consider the establishment of a UNDP resident representative position in the country.

United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention

14. A multisectoral project of drug control capacities is in progress. Its activities include the provision of expert advice on the redrafting of national drug control legislation, support to the Inter-ministerial Commission for Drug Control, a rapid assessment study of the drug use situation and the introduction of a uniform registration and monitoring system. In addition, technical assistance will be provided for the development and implementation of school-based preventive education and workshops on peer counselling and peer-supported outreach for adolescents. Other features are training courses for the police on advanced drug law enforcement techniques and for the customs and border police in land-border controls. The project also includes the development of a computerized drug intelligence system for the customs administration and the

provision of laboratory equipment of drug-testing laboratories and fellowships for selected forensic staff. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is included in the group of recipients covered by the joint United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)-European Union PHARE programme. The country will benefit from activities aimed at the organization of coordinated and European-compatible land-border controls with Bulgaria and Albania to address the drug trafficking route from Turkey to Italy, strengthening of controls at the Skopje airport and development of computerized systems for intelligence processing, analysis and criminal investigations for the police and customs through the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) global network. It will also set up mechanisms for cross-border controlled deliveries and create professional networks for operational exchange of information and cross-border case management.

15. The Office, in cooperation with the Government and with the assistance of UNPREDEP, has recently completed two training courses on organized crime, corruption and money laundering for senior officials in the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Justice and Finance. Follow-up action will focus on examining current penal and banking legislation and creating an effective implementing mechanism, strengthening analytical and operational capabilities, improving inter-ministerial cooperation and enhancing international mutual assistance. Plans are also under way for creating an anti-corruption commission and a cadre of financial police.

World Bank

16. To date, the World Bank has committed US$ 300 million to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in support of eight programmes and projects. From an initial focus on macroeconomic stabilization and transformation of ownership, World Bank-supported activities have been diversified to include upgrading the economic infrastructure, promoting private sector growth and strengthening social services and benefits. Most recently, the Bank has continued to support implementation of a structural adjustment loan aimed at completing large-scale privatization, liberalizing trade and reforming agricultural policies. A project has also been approved for primary school renovation, curriculum reform and teachers' training. In the coming months, approval is expected for a second private sector development project to increase access to credit for private businesses and for an irrigation rehabilitation project to renovate existing systems and develop water users' associations. Over the next year, efforts will be concentrated on the preparation of a social sectors adjustment credit, as well as infrastructure projects in transportation, energy, and water supply. The World Bank will continue to work to improve the policy environment for private sector investment and growth.

World Health Organization

17. WHO has, in the past several months, focused on priorities set up in the Collaborative Agreement for 1996 and 1997 between its European Regional Office and the Ministry of Health. Future action will be concentrated on the case management and prevention of tuberculosis; training medical professionals for health promotion in schools; establishing a WHO documentation and information centre at the University Medical Library in Skopje; training in the epidemiology

of crises in public health; and developing and implementing the National Environment and Health Action Plan. WHO will also concentrate on the preparation of a national essential drug list and provide inputs in military medical exercises related to interventions in natural catastrophes, together with the civilian sector and national and international non-governmental organizations and in collaboration with potentially affected countries. The next biennium will also be devoted to reaching regional targets of the "Health for All" priorities of the EUROHEALTH programme, focusing on developing further the plan for a national health policy; preventing and controlling communicable and non-communicable diseases, including diabetes; and providing technical assistance for reconstruction of the pharmaceutical sector.

IV. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

18. Since my report of 11 August 1997 (S/1997/631), there has been a further gradual improvement of relations between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and some of its neighbours. Although the name-related dispute with Greece remains unsolved, both countries are continuing negotiations under the auspices of my personal envoy, Mr. Cyrus Vance. Economic relations between the two countries have, however, intensified significantly, as has cross-border traffic. The situation along the Albanian border has been characterized by a number of incidents, including exchanges of fire. In numerous instances, United Nations personnel have been exposed to indiscriminate firing by armed individuals along the border. Some improvement in the exercise of authority by Albanian border personnel has been observed, but the number of regular border guards along Albania's eastern border remains insignificant. Hope has been generated by several high-level meetings at different international forums, notably at the recent summit of the Council of Europe as well as the Balkan summit in Crete, Greece, between the leaderships of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania on the one hand, and Bulgaria, on the other.

19. There has been little progress so far regarding the demarcation of the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. During the reporting period, a continuing pattern of patrolling by border units of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and border units of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, respectively, was observed south and north of the United Nations Patrol Line (UNPL). When encountering each other, the patrols of both sides appear to honour their commitment to avoid hostile actions.

20. Domestically, inter-ethnic tensions and socio-economic difficulties continue to affect negatively the strengthening of the country's stability. Last September, the ethnic Albanian Mayor of Gostivar, Mr. Rufi Osmani, was sentenced by the Gostivar Municipal Court to 13 years and eight months' imprisonment on charges of inciting national, racial and religious hatred, organizing resistance against the State and failing to comply with the ruling of the Constitutional Court on the flag issue (see S/1997/631, para. 16). The Chairman of the Gostivar Municipal Council, the Mayor of Tetovo and the Chairman of the Tetovo Municipal Council have also been sentenced to terms of three years and two years and six months. All four have been released pending their appeals. The political scene continues to reflect strains between the ruling coalition and the opposition parties, which are still calling for early

parliamentary elections. However, the Government has advanced work on the new electoral laws, on which it intends to consult both the opposition and the relevant international institutions, notably the Council of Europe. Measures are under way to make the newly created Office of the Ombudsman fully operational. This office, the first such national institution in the southern Balkans, could play an important role in safeguarding the constitutional rights of citizens and effectively promote the concept of the rule of law.

21. The most notable positive development of recent months has been the beginning, under the auspices of the President of the Republic, of an inter-party dialogue on issues most vital to the nation. As a consequence of this dialogue, on 23 October 1997 a joint statement was signed by the leaders of 11 political parties on three major issues: the country's integration into the European Union, membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the country's relations with its neighbours.

22. The Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights has, in her report of 30 September 1997 (E/CN.4/1998/12), recommended that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia be removed from her mandate in the light of the considerable progress in the protection of human rights in the country. At the same time, the Special Rapporteur has indicated that some important legal provisions continue to be violated with disturbing frequency, including in the form of abuse of police authority. She has recommended human rights training programmes for the police.

V. OBSERVATIONS

23. Over the past five years, UNPREDEP has successfully contributed to preventing the spillover of conflicts elsewhere in the region into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It has promoted dialogue among the various political forces and ethnic communities, provided humanitarian assistance to the local population and helped to initiate a number of development projects which have contributed to enhancing social integration and national capacity- and institution-building. The mission owes much of its success to the active support and cooperation it has received from the host Government and all other political and ethnic forces in the country.

24. Peace and stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue, however, to depend largely on developments in other parts of the region. In this connection, concerns have emerged over the uncertainty of the outcome of the presidential elections in Serbia and the possible repercussion that this outcome may bring in the area. Increased violence in Kosovo has also raised fears of a spillover effect on ethnic Albanians in the host country. Similarly, the slow progress in implementing the civilian aspects of the Dayton Peace Accords in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in the Republika Srpska, has underscored the need for a longer-term commitment by the international community in that country. Although none of those factors represents an immediate threat to peace and stability in the host country, they highlight the level of unpredictability of, and the dangers inherent in, developments outside the control of the host country's authorities.

25. The effects of inter-ethnic relations on long-term stability remain a matter of concern. Consequently the useful work being carried out in this area by OSCE is very much appreciated. In meetings with my Special Representative, officials of the host Government have made it clear to him that there would be very limited scope for the extension of his good offices role into the area of inter-ethnic relations, considering that there are already several parallel initiatives dealing with the related issues. While my Special Representative has, therefore, not been able to pursue a more active role in this regard, he has continued to report on inter-ethnic issues and developments with a bearing on internal peace and stability. In general, there seems to be growing recognition of the need for additional steps to be taken to harmonize inter-ethnic relations in order to enhance internal stability which, in turn, would have positive effects on the stability of the Balkan region as a whole. In this connection, President Gligorov's initiative to start an inter-party dialogue on issues of vital importance to the nation deserves special mention.

26. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the host Government, in a letter addressed to me on 3 November 1997 (S/1997/838 and Corr.1), requested an extension of the UNPREDEP mandate for a period of 12 months. He expressed his Government's concern at the continued sources of destabilization in the region, citing in particular the situation in Montenegro and Kosovo, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the lack of security along the border with Albania; and the absence of progress in the demarcation of the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

27. As indicated in my report of 11 August 1997 (S/1997/631, para. 23), my Special Representative and senior staff at Headquarters have held consultations with the host Government, other international organizations and interested Member States on the type of international presence that would be most appropriate for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia after 1 December 1997. Much attention in those consultations has been devoted to possible exit strategies, including the modalities of a termination of the UNPREDEP operation when conditions permit.

28. An important element of any exit strategy is to ensure that, once the UNPREDEP operation terminates, proper successor arrangements be put in place to reassure the Government of the international community's continued commitment to peace and stability in the country. These successor arrangements must be carefully designed in consultation with the Government. Within the United Nations family, and under the auspices of my Special Representative, a consultative meeting of the interested organizations and agencies of the system on appropriate successor arrangements is under active consideration for early next year.

29. The reduction of the military component by 300 all ranks, which was initiated on 1 October 1997 pursuant to Security Council resolution 1110 (1997), can be viewed as the commencement of a phased exit in response to the improved situation in the region. The Council may wish to observe the effectiveness of this initial reduction before contemplating its next step. In this regard, Council members may wish to bear in mind that any decision to further downsize the military component could hardly be implemented before the spring of 1998 owing to the severe winter conditions in the region. I intend to revert to the

Council in due course with appropriate recommendations for further reductions, on the basis of a careful assessment of the situation in all its relevant aspects. It can already be anticipated, however, that the following two broad options will lend themselves to consideration by the Council:

Option A: In addition to the current 35 United Nations military observers, UNPREDEP would consist of two task forces composed of a total of 400 soldiers operating from three to four base camps. The predominant task of the military would be to act, through their presence, as a psychological deterrent. However, the limited, yet flexible and mobile capability of the Force would still allow monitoring and patrolling in critical areas, including by establishing temporary observation posts, according to exigencies of the circumstances at a given time. Such a force would also contain a rapid, self-defence reaction capability.

Option B: A total of 100 United Nations military observers would operate from eight team offices, located throughout the Republic's northern and western border areas. This option would provide a reasonably flexible patrolling and monitoring capability, again responsive to prevailing circumstances.

30. In the meantime, I would like to recommend that the mandate of UNPREDEP be extended for an additional period of six months until 31 May 1998 in the strength and configuration described in paragraph 3 of the present report. At the same time, my Special Representative and the Force Commander of UNPREDEP have been instructed to monitor the situation closely so as to be in a position to advise me as soon as conditions would permit a further reduction of the force.

31. An addendum on the financial aspects of the above recommendation will be issued separately.

32. In concluding the present report, I wish to express my gratitude to the Governments that have made their military and police personnel available to UNPREDEP for their contribution to the success of the mission. I also wish to pay tribute to my Special Representative, Mr. Henryk J. Sokalski, and to the Force Commander, Brigadier General Bent Sohnemann, as well as to all the personnel under their command, for their dedication and perseverance in carrying out the tasks entrusted to them by the Security Council.

Annex

Composition and strength of the military and civilian police elements of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force as at 10 November 1997

Nationality	Military			Civilian police
	Operational	Headquarters	Military observers	
Argentina	–	–	1	–
Bangladesh	–	–	2	–
Belgium	–	–	1	–
Brazil	–	–	2	–
Canada	–	–	1	–
Czech Republic	–	–	1	–
Denmark	38	9	1	–
Egypt	–	–	1	–
Finland	352	15	1	6
Ghana	–	–	1	–
Indonesia	50	1	2	–
Ireland	–	–	2	–
Jordan	–	–	2	2
Kenya	–	–	2	–
Nepal	–	–	1	–
New Zealand	–	–	1	–
Nigeria	–	–	1	4
Norway	37	6	2	–
Pakistan	–	–	2	–
Poland	–	–	2	–
Portugal	–	–	1	–
Russian Federation	–	–	2	2
Sweden	32	7	1	–
Switzerland	–	–	1	4
Turkey	–	–	–	4
Ukraine	–	–	1	4
United States of America	366	11	–	–
Total	875	49	35	26

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